

There is yet time to show that the descendants of the Pinckneys, the Sumpters, the Rutledges, and of the thousand other names which adorn the pages of our revolutionary history, will not abandon that Union to support which so many of them fought and bled and died. I adjure you as you honor their memory; as you love the cause of freedom, to which they dedicated their lives, as you prize the peace of your country, the lives of its best citizens, and your own fair fame, to retrace your steps. Snatch from the archives of your state the disorganizing edict of its convention; bid its members to re-assemble and promulgate the decided expressions of your will to remain in the path which alone can conduct you to safety, prosperity and honor—tell them that compared to disunion all other evils are light, because that brings with it an accumulation of all—declare that you will never take the field unless the star spangled banner of your country shall float over you—that you will not be stigmatized when dead, and dishonored and scorned while you live, as the authors of the first attack on the constitution of your country!—Its destroyers you cannot be. You may disturb its peace—you may interrupt the course of its prosperity—you may cloud its reputation for stability—but its tranquility will be restored, its prosperity will return, and the stain up its national character will be transferred, and remain an eternal blot on the memory of those who caused the disorder.

Fellow-citizens of the United States! The threat of unhallowed disunion—the names of those, once respected, by whom it is uttered—the array of military force to support it—denotes the approach of a crisis in our affairs on which the continuance of our unexampled prosperity, our political existence, and perhaps that of all free government, may depend. The conjunction demanded a free, a full and explicit enunciation, not only of my intentions, but of my principles of action; and as the claim was asserted of a right by a state to annul the laws of the Union, and even to secede from it at pleasure, a frank exposition of my opinions in relation to the origin and form of our government, and the construction I give to the instrument by which it was created, seemed to be proper. Having the fullest confidence in the justness of the legal and constitutional opinion of my duties which has been expressed, I rely with equal confidence on your undivided support in my determination to execute the laws; to preserve the Union by all constitutional means; to arrest, if possible, by moderate but